

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TOKYO 06979 01 OF 05 202210Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 OMB-01
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OES-07 DOE-15 SOE-02 EUR-12 /115 W
-----111803 202246Z /73

R 200836Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7267
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 05 TOKYO 06979

DEPT PLEASE PASS ALL NATO CAPITALS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: MARR,MPOL, JA
SUBJECT: JAPANESE DEFENSE - THE FUTURE

SUMMARY. "CHANGIBG JAPANESE ATTITUDES TOWARD SECURITY
AND DEFENSE" HAS BEEN A FAVORITE TOPIC OF CONVERSATION
IN TOKYO DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS, OR SO. IT HAS
ALSO BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A NUMBER OF ARTICLES IN THE
FOREIGN MEDIA. SPECULATION HAS RANGED FROM THE THOUGHT
THAT SOME OF THE TABOOS THAT HAVE UNTIL NOW INHIBITED
A RATIONAL CONSIDERATION OF SECURITY ISSUES HAVE BEEN
SHED, THUS ENABLING JAPAN TO WORK MORE CLOSELY WITH
THE US, TO SUGGESTIONS THAT JAPAN WILL DECIDE TO GO

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TOKYO 06979 01 OF 05 202210Z

IT ALONE, EVENTUALLY ASSUMING A RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS
OWN DEFENSE AND ACQUIRING THE WHEREWITHAL, INCLUDING
NUCLEAR WEAPONS, TO DO SO. THIS LATTER VIEW HAS BEEN
ENCOURAGED BY FEARS OF A US "WITHDRAWAL FROM ASIA."
NEITHER EXTREME STRIKES US AS ACCURATE. TO BE SURE,
THE MST AND THE SELF-DEFENSE FORCES ARE MORE WIDELY
SUPPORTED THAN AT ANY TIME IN THE PAST AND THE GOVERN-

MENT HAS TAKEN MORE FORTHRIGHT POSITIONS ON DEFENSE QUESTIONS. NEVERTHELESS ADHERENCE TO THE PEACE CONSTITUTION AND THE THREE NON-NUCLEAR PRINCIPLES REMAIN FUNDAMENTAL TO DEFENSE THINKING, AND THE GREAT MAJORITY OF GOJ POLICY-MAKERS AND SENIOR BUREAUCRATS CONTINUE STRONGLY TO FAVOR MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO IN US-JAPAN RELATIONS, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT JAPAN SHOULD DO MORE TO SUPPORT THE US MILITARY PRESENCE. WE BELIEVE THAT PRESENT JAPANESE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY CONTINUES TO SERVE US INTERESTS AS IT CONTRIBUTES TO THE MAINTENANCE OF STABILITY IN THE AREA AND OBVIATES THE NEED FOR JAPAN TO DEVELOP A THREATENING AND, THEREFORE, DESTABILIZING MILITARY CAPABILITY. WE CONCLUDE THAT THE CURRENT INTENSIFIED SECURITY DISCUSSION DOES NOT HERALD A FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT IN JAPANESE DEFENSE POLICY; THAT WHAT WE HAVE SEEN THUS FAR IS ENTIRELY APPROPRIATE FOR THIS COUNTRY; AND THAT JAPANESE POLICY MUST EVOLVE AT ITS OWN PACE. END SUMMARY.

1. ONE OF THE FAVORITE TOPICS OF CONVERSATION IN TOKYO THESE DAYS IS THE "CHANGING JAPANESE ATTITUDE TOWARD DEFENSE AND SECURITY," AND WHAT IT PORTENDS. DEPENDING ON ONE'S INTERLOCUTOR, AMONG THE OPINIONS ONE HEARS IS THAT (1) JAPAN HAS FINALLY SHED THE WORST OF THE TABOOS INHIBITING RATIONAL CONSIDERATION OF ITS SECURITY NEEDS, AND IS NOW IN A POSITION TO WORK CLOSELY IN COOPERATION WITH THE US WITHOUT DAMAGE TO THE PEACE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TOKYO 06979 01 OF 05 202210Z

CONSTITUTION; OR (2) JAPAN NO LONGER CAN RELY ON THE US, NOW EMBARKED ON A "WITHDRAWAL FROM ASIA," AND MUST THEREFORE BUILD UP ITS MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT SO AS EVENTUALLY TO ASSUME THE FULL BURDEN FOR DEFENSE OF ITS ENVIRONMENT, FOR WHICH PURPOSE IT WILL NEED TO ACQUIRE MORE SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS--WHO KNOWS, EVEN NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THOSE INCLINED TO THE FIRST VIEW FORESEE MODEST INCREASES IN DEFENSE SPENDING, INCLUDING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE US FORCES IN JAPAN; THOSE INCLINED TO THE SECOND VIEW FORESEE A BUILD-UP IN DOMESTIC DEFENSE PRODUCTION AND RAPID INCREASES IN DEFENSE SPENDING. ONE SHOULD ADD QUICKLY, HOWEVER, THAT MANY OF THOSE GIVEN TO TALKING ALONG THE LINES OF THE SECOND POINT OF VIEW, DO SO WITH INTENT OF BUILDING RESISTANCE TO THIS COURSE AND IN THE HOPE THAT JAPAN WILL CONTINUE PRETTY MUCH ALONG ITS PRESENT COURSE. THIS MESSAGE ATTEMPTS TO SORT OUT SOME OF THE FACTS AND FICTION ENTAILED IN THE ON-GOING SECURITY DEBATE.

2. THE VIETNAM WAR WAS A DEEPLY DIVISIVE ISSUE IN DOMESTIC POLITICS AND JAPAN'S CLOSE SECURITY TIES WITH THE US THROUGH THE MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY (MST) WERE

AN OBJECT OF INTENSE OPPOSITION ATTACK. WITH THE END OF THE WAR, PROGRESS IN JAPAN-PRC TIES (DISPROVING CHARGES THAT THE MST WOULD PREVENT SUCH PROGRESS), AND THE MARKED GROWTH OF SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN REGION, THE US-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONSHIP HAS ALL BUT VANISHED AS A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE IN DOMESTIC POLITICS. THE MST IS NOW SUPPORTED NOT ONLY BY THE RULING LDP, BUT ALSO BY THE SMALLER CENTRIST DSP AND HAS THE TACIT SUPPORT OF THE KOMEITO. THE JAPAN SOCIALIST PARTY NO LONGER REGARDS THE SECURITY RELATIONSHIP, PER SE, AS A PROM-

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 TOKYO 06979 02 OF 05 202212Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 OMB-01
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OES-07 DOE-15 SOE-02 EUR-12 /115 W
-----111891 202246Z /73

R 200836Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7268
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 05 TOKYO 06979

ISING TARGET FOR ATTACK ON THE GOVERNMENT. AS A RESULT, THE GOJ HAS BEEN ABLE TO BE MUCH MORE FORTHRIGHT IB DEALING WITH DEFENSE ISSUES THROUGH PUBLIC STATEMENTS, BUDGETARY APPROPRIATIONS, AND COOPERATION WITH US FORCES, THAN AT ANY TIME IN THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.

3. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THE PERCEIVED PRIORITY GIVEN BY THE US TO ITS NATO COMMITMENT, AND PLANNED WITHDRAWAL OF GROUND COMBAT FORCES FROM THE ROK--JUXTAPOSED AGAINST EXPANDING SOVIET NAVAL POWER AND CONTINUED SOVIET INTRANSIGENCE ON SUCH BILATERAL ISSUES AS THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES AND FISHERIES--HAVE SERVED TO AROUSE CON-

SIDERABLE SPECULATION IN JAPAN ABOUT FUTURE US INTENTIONS IN ASIA, THE CREDIBILITY OF THE US COMMITMENT TO THE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA, AND WHETHER JAPAN SHOULD MAKE A SIGNIFICANTLY
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TOKYO 06979 02 OF 05 202212Z

EXPANDED EFFORT FOR ITS OWN DEFENSE. ALTHOUGH TOO EARLY TO ANALYZE DEFINITELY, THE PRC INCURSIONS INTO THE SENKAKUS COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THIS FEELING.

4. THE COMBINATION OF ALL THESE FACTORS TOGETHER WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME DURING WHICH THE MAJORITY OF THE PUBLIC HAS COME TO ACCEPT THE MST AND THE SELF DEFENSE FORCES AS A NATURAL PART OF THE LANDSCAPE, HAVE ENABLED THE GOVERNMENT TO BREAK A FAIR AMOUNT OF NEW GROUND IN DISCUSSING DEFENSE POLICY. IT HAS DONE SO, MOREOVER, WITHOUT ATTRACTING THE KIND OF OPPOSITION AND PUBLIC CRITICISM SEEN IN AN EARLIER ERA. IN RECENT DIET DEBATES, FOR EXAMPLE, WHILE PLACING AS MUCH EMPHASIS AS EVER ON THE US-JAPAN TREATY AS THE CORNERSTONE OF JAPAN'S NATIONAL SECURITY, GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN HAVE FORTHRIGHTLY UPHELD THE POSITION THAT THE SELF DEFENSE FORCES ARE LEGAL; THAT JAPAN COULD CONSTITUTIONALLY POSSESS NUCLEAR WEAPONS, ALTHOUGH IT IS FORBIDDEN TO DO SO BY NATIONAL POLICY AND THE NPT; THAT JAPAN COULD THEORETICALLY POSSESS AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER, THOUGH IT HAS NO INTENTION OF DOING SO; THAT JAPAN'S DEFENSE PREPAREDNESS PLANNING MUST ADAPT TO CHANGING TECHNOLOGY; THAT NEW MODEL AIRCRAFT WOULD BE EQUIPPED WITH HITHERTO TABOO SYSTEMS CONSIDERED POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE, I.E., MID-AIR REFUELING CAPABILITY AND BOMB SIGHTS; ETC. THE CONTROVERSIAL CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT STAFF COUNCIL, GEN. HIROOMI KURISU HAS PUSHED THE DEBATE EVEN FURTHER BY SUGGESTING THAT MILITARY POWER, TO BE EFFECTIVE, MUST HAVE A "PSYCHOLOGICAL DETERRENT," I.E., AN OFFENSIVE CAPABILITY. GOJ SPOKESMEN HAVE ALSO DISPOSED OF QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE NUCLEAR ISSUE (MIDWAY) AND PRIOR CONSULTATION ISSUES IN A FORTHRIGHT MANNER DESIGNED
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TOKYO 06979 02 OF 05 202212Z

TO MINIMIZE OPENINGS FOR OPPOSITION ATTACK AND TO CONTAIN POTENTIAL CONTROVERSY.

5. THE MEDIA GENERALLY HAVE REACTED FAVORABLY TO THE SHIFT TOWARDS A MORE "REALISTIC" DEFENSE DEBATE. EVEN ASAHI'S EDITORS, RISING AS GUARDIANS AGAINST AN UPSURGE

OF MILITARISM, EMBARKED ON A SERIES OF ARTICLES BY DIFFERENT SPECIALISTS UNDER THE RUBRIC "TURN TO THE RIGHT," ONLY TO PRODUCE A SERIES OF FAIRLY OBJECTIVE ANALYSES OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE SECURITY DEBATE, LEAVING THE IMPRESSION THAT NOTHING WAS MOVING THAT FAST AND THERE APPEARED TO BE NO INSIDIOUS PLOTS AFOOT. TO BE SURE, SOME LEADERS OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY HAVE SEEN THE UNFOLDING DEBATE AND CHANGING ATTITUDES AS OPENING THE WAY TO MORE DEFENSE SPENDING, WHICH COULD BE A SIGNIFICANT BOON TO INDUSTRIES IN THE THROES OF RECESSION--SHIPBUILDING, HEAVY INDUSTRIES, AND THEIR SUPPLIERS. THEY HAVE FLOATED TRIAL BALLOONS SUGGESTING THE POSSIBILITY OF LOOSENING JAPAN'S STRINGENT ARMS EXPORT REGULATIONS, AND SOME LABOR LEADERS, WE UNDERSTAND, ARE BEGINNING TO LOOK FAVORABLY ON INCREASED DOMESTIC ARMS MANUFACTURE AS A MEANS TO REVIVE THE ECONOMY AND INCREASE, OR AT LEAST MAINTAIN, EMPLOYMENT. THE DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT, SUCH AS IT IS, HAS BEGUN TENTATIVELY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW CLIMATE, PARTLY OUT OF A GENUINE CONCERN FOR JAPAN'S SECURITY AND PARTLY TO INCREASE ITS OWN INFLUENCE. IN SO DOING, BOTH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND THE GOVERNMENT ARE ACUTELY CONSCIOUS OF THE CRITICISM JAPAN IS RECEIVING IN THE US THAT IT IS GETTING A "FREE RIDE" ON DEFENSE WHILE PROFITING IN OUR BILATERAL TRADE. THE JAPANESE ARE ALSO AWARE OF VOICES IN THE US URGING A GREATER DEFENSE EFFORT FOR STRATEGIC AND GEOPOLITICAL REASONS.

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 TOKYO 06979 03 OF 05 202214Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 OMB-01
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OES-07 DOE-15 SOE-02 EUR-12 /115 W
-----111938 202247Z /73

R 200836Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7269
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA

S E C R E T SECTION 03 OF 05 TOKYO 06979

DEFENSE EFFORT FOR STRATEGIC AND GEOPOLITICAL REASONS. THEY HAVE ALSO TAKEN NOTE OF CHINESE ATTITUDES TOWARD THEIR DEFENSE POSTURE, E.G., CHINESE COMMENTS RECENTLY TO A VISITING SOCIALIST DELEGATION THAT A MORE POWERFUL JAPANESE DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT, PRESUMABLY TO COUNTER THE SOVIETS, WOULD NOT BE INAPPROPRIATE.

6. AMERICAN AND FOREIGN MEDIA HAVE BEEN QUICK TO PICK UP THE CHANGING ATTITUDES. THROUGH SELECTIVE INTERVIEWING, CORRESPONDENTS AND FREE-LANCERS HAVE OCCASIONALLY MANAGED TO BUILD A CASE SUGGESTING THAT JAPAN WAS ON THE VERGE OF A SIGNIFICANT EXPANSION OF ITS DEFENSE CAPABILITY, MORE INDEPENDENT OF THE US AND MORE CAPABLE OF DEFENDING JAPAN AGAINST THE CONTINGENCY OF A FURTHER US WITHDRAWAL FROM ASIA. THE PROSPECT OF A NUCLEAR JAPAN HAS ALSO BEEN REVIVED, STARTING WITH THE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TOKYO 06979 03 OF 05 202214Z

OBVIOUS CONCLUSION THAT GIVEN ITS ENORMOUS ECONOMIC CAPACITY, JAPAN COULD PRODUCE A NUCLEAR FORCE IN A RELATIVELY SHORT TIME. WHILE THE SO-CALLED "NUCLEAR ALLERGY" HAS EVOLVED TO THE POINT WHERE THE MEDIA AND SOME SECTORS OF PUBLIC ARE MORE CONCERNED BY THE GOJ POSITION ON WHETHER THE MIDWAY CARRIIS NUCLEAR WEAPONS THAN WITH THE FACT ITSELF, THERE REMAINS A DEEP SEATED AVERSION TO JAPAN ACQUIRING A NUCLEAR CAPABILITY AND ALMOST UNIVERAL SUPPORT FOR THE SO-CALLED NON-NUCLEAR PRINCIPLES. MOREOVER, WE BELIEVE THERE ARE OTHER SIGNIFICANT OBSTACLES TO SUCH A COURSE, INCLUDING JAPAN'S INABILITY TO MOUNT A MAJOR COVERT WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM WITHOUT DETECTION AND THE LACK OF A CONVINCING MILITARY RATIONALE FOR THE POSSESSION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

7. IN OUR VIEW, WHEN ALL THE SMOKE IS CLEARED AWAY, THE PREPONDERANT MAJORITY OF GOJ POLICY-MAKERS AND SENIOR BUREAUCRATS STRONGLY FAVOR MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO IN US-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONS, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT JAPAN SHOULD DO MORE TO SUPPORT THE US MILITARY PRESENCE HERE. THEY WOULD PREFER IN THEIR HEART OF HEARTS THAT THE US NOT CARRY OUT ITS PLANS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF GROUND FORCES FROM THE ROK, AND REACT QUICKLY TO ANY SUGGESTION THIS DECISION IS A HARBINGER OF MORE TO COME. THEY ARE ALSO ACUTELY AWARE OF THE DELICACY OF JAPAN'S POSITION IN THE AREA WITH ITS HEAVY DEPENDENCE UPON STABLE

RELATIONS WITH ITS RAW MATERIAL SUPPLIERS AND PRINCIPAL
MARKETS. THEY ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED, THEREFORE,
ABOUT WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS A GRADUAL DECLINE IN THE
CREDIBILITY OF THE US COMMITMENT TO DEFEND JAPAN AND
VERY MUCH FEAR THAT THE COROLLARY COULD WELL BE A
GRADUAL SWING TO THE RIGHT AND THE RISE OF NATIONALISTIC
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TOKYO 06979 03 OF 05 202214Z

FORCES CALLING FOR A MORE INDEPENDENT DEFENSE POSTURE
FOR JAPAN AND ULTIMATELY, THE UNRAVELLING OF THE COMPLEX
SKEIN OF RELATIONSHIPS THAT BINDS JAPAN SO CLOSELY TO

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 TOKYO 06979 04 OF 05 202216Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 OMB-01
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OES-07 DOE-15 SOE-02 EUR-12 /115 W
-----111973 202248Z /73

R 200836Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7270
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA

S E C R E T SECTION 04 OF 05 TOKYO 06979

THE US. WE ALSO PERCEIVE CONCERN LEST FAILURE TO OVERCOME
CURRENT TRADE AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS LEAD THE
US TO TAKE RETALIATORY OR DISCRIMINATORY MEASURES THAT
IN TURN WOULD KINDLE NATIONALIST, GO IT ALONE SENTIMENT.
FOR THE PRESENT, CONCERNS OF THIS ORDER ARE ONLY VAGUELY

ENUNCIATED, MORE VISCERAL THAN RATIONAL, BASED UPON HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN ON CONCRETE EVIDENCE. NEVERTHELESS THE QUEASINESS OF THIS LEADERSHIP GROUP, WHICH GREW UP EITHER DURING THE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP OR ITS IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH AND WHICH HAS THE MOST TO FEAR FROM A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE DIRECTION OF JAPAN'S FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY, IS SHARED BY A NUMBER OF MEDIA OBSERVERS.

8. WITH THESE CONCERNS IN THE BACKGROUND, ONE NOT UN-
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TOKYO 06979 04 OF 05 202216Z

WELCOME REACTION ON THE PART OF MODERATE PROPONENTS OF CONTINUED US PRESENCE HAS BEEN TO ADVOCATE FORTHCOMING SECURITY COOPERATION WITH THE US IN THE FORM OF QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS FOR JAPAN'S SELF DEFENSE FORCES, IMPROVED JOINT-PLANNING, AND FURTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF US FORCES IN JAPAN. TO BE SURE, THERE IS SOME RISK THAT AT AN UNDEFINED POINT JAPAN MIGHT QUESTION WHETHER IT WOULD NOT DO AS WELL BY DIRECTING ITS SPENDING TOWARD ITS OWN FORCES, BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE CREDIBILITY OF OUR COMMITMENT TO THE WESTERN PACIFIC SHOWS SIGNS OF DECLINING TO THE EXTENT OF ENCOURAGING SUCH A TREND. WE HAVE ALSO REPEATEDLY ATTEMPTED TO REASSURE THE JAPANESE LEADERSHIP THAT THE US IS NOT WITHDRAWING FROM ASIA AND THAT IT STILL REGARDS ITS INTERESTS IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC AS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT; THE SECDEF'S LOS ANGELES SPEECH WAS VERY HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD. WITH THE GROUND FORCE REDUCTION IN THE ROK UNDERWAY, HOWEVER, AND CONTINUED US EMPHASIS ON ITS NATO COMMITMENT, ONLY OUR FUTURE ACTIONS AND FORCE DEPLOYMENTS, PARTICULARLY NAVAL, WILL HAVE ANY TELLING EFFECT IN THE MID TERM. IN FACT, WE SUSPECT THAT AFTER THE FIRST TRANCHE OF THE SECOND DIVISION IS WITHDRAWN FROM THE ROK, THERE WILL MAY BE A RELAXATION OF CONCERN AS THE VERY SUBSTANTIAL RESIDUAL US DETERRENT IS APPRAISED.

9. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE PRESENT JAPANESE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY, WITH ITS MIX OF RELIANCE ON THE US COMMITMENT AND JAPANESE FORCE IMPROVEMENTS, SERVES US INTERESTS WELL. IT CONTRIBUTES SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE LARGER US GOAL OF MAINTAINING PEACE AND STABILITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA WITHOUT CREATING DANGEROUS FRICTION WITH ANY OF THE REGION'S OTHER POWERS. A JAPAN WITH REGIONAL CONVENTIONAL FORCE PROJECTION CAPABILITIES,
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TOKYO 06979 04 OF 05 202216Z

TO SAY NOTHING OF NUCLEAR-ARMED JAPAN WOULD MOST CERTAINLY BE VIEWED A THREAT BY OTHER NATIONS OF EAST ASIA, INCLUDING AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, AND WOULD UPSET THE NOW RELATIVELY STABLE BALANCE AMONG THE FOUR MAJOR POWERS INVOLVED IN NORTHEAST ASIA. BOTH THE CHINESE AND THE SOVIETS WOULD PROBABLY UNDERTAKE VIGOROUS, AND INEVITABLY DESTABILIZING, BUILDUPS TO COUNTER AND CONTAIN THIS NEW POWER ELEMENT. IT WOULD IN THE END SEVERELY UNDERCUT THE DELICATE SKEIN OF TRADE AND POLITICAL RELATIONS IN THE AREA ON WHICH JAPAN IS SO DEPENDENT FOR RESOURCES, MARKETS AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING. THE NET RESULT WOULD BE TO POSE PROBLEMS FOR AMERICAN POLICY OF A FAR GREATER MAGNITUDE THAN THOSE WE PRESENTLY FACE. MOST JAPANESE RECOGNIZE THE MANIFEST DISADVANTAGES THIS COURSE WOULD HAVE FOR JAPAN AS WELL. NONETHELESS, A FIRM, RELIABLE US ROLE AND THE EXERCISE OF IMAGINATIVE, STEADY LEADERSHIP IS ESSENTIAL TO PREVENT EVENTS FROM TAKING A DIFFERENT COURSE.

10. OUR TENTATIVE CONCLUSION IS THAT THE MORE INTENSIFIED NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON DEFENSE DOES NOT HEARLD ANY FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT IN JAPANESE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE SUBSTANCE OF THE IMPORTANT ISSUES CONCERNED. THE JAPANESE CAN NOW HAVE DIET DEBATES ON THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS WITH SURPRISINGLY LITTLE FUROR, BUT ARE NO NEARER A NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM--THEY CAN DISCUSS, BUT HAVE NOT OVERCOME THEIR NUCLEAR ALLERGY. MORE OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR GOJ DEFENSE POLICY DOES NOT MEAN THE JAPANESE ARE MOVING TOWARD THE ASSUMPTION OF SIGNIFICANT REGIONAL MILITARY RESPONSIBILITIES. IN A

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 TOKYO 06979 05 OF 05 202217Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 OMB-01
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OES-07 DOE-15 SOE-02 EUR-12 /115 W
-----112001 210419Z /73

R 200836Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7271
INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA

S E C R E T SECTION 05 OF 05 TOKYO 06979

SENSE, THE INCREASED PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF THESE QUESTIONS IS SOMETHING OF A PROPHYLACTIC, WITHOUT WHICH CONFLICTING PHILOSOPHIES COULD NOT BE RECONCILED OR EVEN EXAMINED OPENLY, AND PRESSURES COULD BUILD, WITH UNPREDICTABLE LONGER RANGE RESULTS FOR THE JAPANESE BODY POLITIC.

11. IN TERMS OF EVOLVING POPULAR ATTITUDES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC POLICIES ON DEFENSE, JAPAN STILL IS ON AN UPWARD CURVE. THE DIALOGUE HAS NOT IN ANY SENSE APPROACHED THE LIMITS OF WHAT WE SHOULD REGARD AS PROPER AND APPROPRIATE FOR THIS COUNTRY. WHILE JAPANESE DEFENSE POLICY WILL BEAR CLOSE WATCHING, AND MUST ALWAYS BE EVALUATED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UNIQUE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL FACTORS AT WORK HERE, THE SITUATION TO

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TOKYO 06979 05 OF 05 202217Z

DATE IS ENCOURAGING RATHER THAN ALARMING. IT OFFERS MODESTLY ENHANCED PROSPECTS FOR AN INCREASED JAPANESE DEFENSE ROLE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE MST. IN AN ERA OF RAPIDLY RISING TECHNICAL SOPHISTICATION AND ACCOMPANYING COSTS, GREATER RESOURCE COMMITMENTS WILL BE REQUIRED OF JAPAN SIMPLY FOR IT EFFECTIVELY TO FULFILL THE RELATIVELY MODEST ROLE WE AND THE GOJ HAVE ENVISIONED. IT APPEARS THAT THE JAPANESE RECOGNIZE THIS AND ARE INCREASINGLY PREPARED TO MAKE THE NECESSARY ADDITIONAL EFFORT. WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS TO SEE DEFENSE SPENDING BREAK THE ONE-PERCENT-OF-GNP BARRIER, WHICH IN ANY EVENT IS BECOMING LESS OF A POLITICAL ISSUE.

12. NONE OF THE FOREGOING INVALIDATES ONE OF THE MORE IMPORTANT DICTUMS OF US DEFENSE POLICY TOWARD JAPAN-- THAT JAPANESE POLICY MUST EVOLVE AT ITS OWN PACE, AND THAT TO ATTEMPT TO FORCE THE PACE COULD RESULT IN RAPIDLY REPOLITICIZING THE US-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONSHIP. THE OLD INHIBITIONS--POLITICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, CONSTITUTIONAL--ARE LESS APT TO PARALYZE THE GOJ TODAY,

BUT THEY REMAIN FORMIDABLE AND MUST BE ADDRESSED BY
JAPANESE LEADERS IN WAYS THAT WILL SOMETIMES SEEM TO
US FAR TOO OBLIQUE. WE CAN CONTINUE TO OFFER JUDICIOUS
AND DISCRETE ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE GOJ AS IT MOVES TOWARD
A MORE ACTIVE, MORE OPENLY COOPERATIVE AND MORE EX-
PENSIVE SECURITY ROLE, BUT WE MUST BE AWARE OF THE
PITFALLS OF EXCESSIVE ZEAL. MANSFIELD

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECURITY, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, MILITARY PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TOKYO06979
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780170-0398
Format: TEL
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780434/aaaabccey.tel
Line Count: 555
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: bd5279aa-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 11
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2899407
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JAPANESE DEFENSE - THE FUTURE SUMMARY. "CHANGIBG JAPANESE ATTITUDES TOWARD SECURITY AND DEFENSE" HAS BEEN A FAVORITE TOPIC OF CONVERSA
TAGS: MARR, MPOL, JA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/bd5279aa-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014